

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY

CONFIDENTIAL STATE 192413

BEIRUT FOR AGRICULTURE ATTACHE

FOLLOWING REPEAT SECSTATE 192413 ACTION DAMASCUS

31 AUGUST 1974. QUOTE:

CONFIDENTIAL STATE 192413

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SY, US, EAID

SUBJECT: U.S.-SYRIAN BILATERAL COOPERATION

1. AS FOLLOW-UP TO SECRETARY'S TALKS ON BILATERAL MATTERS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER KHADDAM WE WANT YOU TO PURSUE DISCUSSION OF THESE VARIOUS ISSUES WITH SARG IN ORDER TO GET THEIR SPECIFIC IDEAS. AIM IS TO LAY GROUNDWORK FOR SECRETARY'S DISCUSSIONS WITH KHADDAM IN SEPTEMBER DURING UNGA, AT WHICH TIME WE EXPECT KHADDAM TO BE ACCOMPANIED BY ECONOMIC AND OTHER EXPERTS. FOLLOWING ARE SUBJECTS TO BE EXPLORED:

2. PL-480. KHADDAM TOLD SECRETARY SYRIA WOULD BE INTERESTED IN WHEAT, RICE, SUGAR AND SOYBEAN OIL. WHEAT AND RICE ARE AVAILABLE UNDER PL-480 BUT SUGAR IS NOT A PL-480 COMMODITY AND SOYBEAN OIL IS IN EXTREMELY SHORT SUPPLY. FIRST OF ALL, WE NEED CLEARER IDEA OF JUST WHAT SYRIA'S NEEDS

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ARE; IN PARTICULAR, WE WONDER WHETHER WHEAT APPROPRIATE

THIS YEAR IN VIEW OF REPORTED SYRIAN BUMPER WHEAT CROP.
FYI: IN VIEW OF TIGHT SUPPLY SITUATION, WE ARE TENTATIVELY
THINKING OF SOMETHING IN FIFTEEN MILLION DOLLAR RANGE:
THIS WOULD BE EQUIVALENT TO APPROXIMATELY 100,000 TONS
WHEAT OR 40,000 TONS RICE. END FYI.

3. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. YOU SHOULD POINT OUT TO SYRIANS
THAT WE KNOW VERY LITTLE ABOUT THEIR ASSISTANCE NEEDS. YOU
MAY SAY WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO HOLD DISCUSSIONS THIS
SUBJECT AT TIME OF KHADDAM'S VISIT TO UNGA IN SEPTEMBER,
ASSUMING FOREIGN MINISTER IS ACCCOMPANIED BY TEAM OF
ECONOMIC EXPERTS. AID ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR NOOTER
WOULD THEN BE AVAILABLE TO GO TO SYRIA IN MID-OCTOBER
FOR FURTHER TALKS IF SYRIANS SO DESIRE.

4. CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION. AS SECRETARY
TOLD KHADDAM, USG IS PREPARED COOPERATE WITH SYRIA IN
CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC FIELDS:

A. CULTURAL. YOU MAY TELL SARG THAT TO BEGIN CULTURAL
EXCHANGE PROGRAM, DEPARTMENT WOULD SUGGEST: (1) BRING-
ING FIVE SYRIANS (LEADERS OR POTENTIAL LEADERS) TO USA
ON INDIVIDUAL 30 DAY INTERNATIONAL VISITOR GRANTS, TO
SEE THIS COUNTRY AND CONSULT WITH THEIR COUNTERPARTS;
(2) BRINGING FIVE SYRIAN STUDENTS TO U.S. FOR GRADUATE
STUDY; (3) POSSIBLY SENDING AN AMERICAN PROFESSOR TO
TEACH AT DAMASCUS UNIVERSITY. (WOULD APPRECIATE POST'S
ADVICE ON APPROPRIATE FIELD FOR AMERICAN PROFESSOR.)
YOU MAY ALSO SAY USG IS PREPARED BEGIN DISCUSSIONS ON
CULTURAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN U.S. AND SYRIA, AS SUGGESTED
TO EMBASSY SOME WEEKS AGO BY FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL, AT
ANY TIME. OUR PREFERENCE WOULD BE FOR GENERAL FRAME-
WORK AGREEMENT ALONG LINES OF U.S.-SAUDI AND U.S.-EGYPTIAN
AGREEMENTS POUCHED TO EMBASSY AUGUST 8.

B. SCIENTIFIC. AS FIRST STEP TOWARD U.S.-SYRIAN COOPERA-
TION IN SCIENTIFIC FIELD, DEPARTMENT NEEDS TO KNOW WHAT
SYRIAN AREAS OF PRIORITY INTEREST ARE. AFTER SYRIANS
INDICATE AREAS OR DIRECTIONS IN WHICH THEY WOULD LIKE TO
MOVE, DEPARTMENT WOULD CONSIDER APPROPRIATE NEXT
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STEPS WHICH COULD INCLUDE PUTTING AMERICAN AND SYRIAN
SPECIALISTS IN CONTACT TO DEVELOP SPECIFIC PROPOSALS
AND ELABORATE METHODS OF COOPERATION. YOU MAY POINT OUT
THAT AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND SCIENCE EDUCATION ARE
FIELDS IN WHICH WE HAVE FRUITFUL SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION
WITH DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, BUT THERE ARE MANY OTHERS
WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED.

5. SUGGEST THAT DURING DISCUSSIONS OF FOREGOING YOU FIND WAY OF BRINGING UP OUTSTANDING USG CLAIMS, WHICH WERE SUMMARIZED IN STATE 159053. WHILE WE DO NOT WANT UN-NECESSARILY TO INTRODUCE ELEMENT OF FRICTION IN OUR TALKS WITH SYRIANS, FAILURE MAKE PROGRESS ON CLAIMS COULD BE LEGALLY INHIBITING FACTOR ON AID AND OTHER ECONOMIC RELATIONS (WE ARE SENDING YOU DETAILS ON THIS BY SEPTEL). WE WANT TO LET SYRIANS KNOW WE ARE READY TO BEGIN DISCUSSING SETTLING OUTSTANDING CLAIMS, BOTH GOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE. YOU MAY POINT OUT THAT WITH EGYPT WE ARE IN PROCESS OF ARRANGING CLAIMS PROCEDURE, AND WORK IS MOVING FORWARD. WE WOULD BE PREPARED DO SAME WITH SYRIA. AT THIS TIME WE KNOW OF ONLY THREE PRIVATE CLAIMS: EXXON CLAIM RE 1965 NATIONALIZATION OF ESSO STANDARD--NEAR EAST (DOLS 432,000 PLUS INTEREST); SOCONY-VACUUM CLAIM FOR 1965 NATIONALIZATION OF ITS INTERESTS IN SYRIA (DOLS 4 MILLION APPROXIMATELY); AND JAMES W. MENHALL CLAIM RE 1958 CANCELLATION OF OIL EXPLORATION PERMITS. HOWEVER, OTHER POTENTIAL CLAIMANTS, INCLUDING SMALL ONES, MIGHT COME FORWARD IF PROCEDURE FOR REGISTRATION OF CLAIMS WERE ESTABLISHED

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